

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2862
CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT SUICIDE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2862, the "Campaign to Prevent Suicide Act," which creates an educational campaign recommended by suicide prevention advocates and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to raise awareness for a three-digit suicide lifeline phone number, suicide prevention resources, and more effective discourse on how to prevent suicide.

This bipartisan legislation is designed to help change the culture around suicide so that all Americans know to engage rather than ignore individuals who might be experiencing suicidal thoughts, and it would:

Fund campaigns to share information about suicide prevention resources like the suicide prevention lifeline, which has been shown to save lives; and

Create new media tools to help television and social media know how to shape the national conversation we need to reduce suicide.

America and Texas face a suicide crisis, and we must come together to fight this tragic epidemic.

Each day in Texas there are more than 6 suicide deaths and nearly 30 hospitalizations for attempted suicide.

Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for Texans and the third leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 24.

60 percent of Texas suicide deaths occur among people 25 to 64 years of age.

Rates of suicide among Whites increased 12 percent since 2000, particularly among females; rates among Blacks and Hispanics have remained stable during the same time.

Estimated medical costs of Texas hospitalizations for suicide attempts average \$8,849 per patient, or more than \$95.6 million annually.

We need to start talking about suicide, and we need to keep talking.

For this reason, in 2019, I convened a panel to discuss mental health and suicide and an all-youth panel to account for how students handle their mental health and what policies they want to see come from Congress.

It was a beautiful and absolutely necessary convening of young people.

They shared with us and tasked us with the solutions and measures they know will positively impact their communities and their generation.

One problem was raised time and time again during the course of this panel: There are far too few resources available to our young people, especially our young people of color, to truly support the staggering prevalence of mental health ailments and effectively combat the growing number of youth suicide.

Matthew 21:16 says: from the mouths of babies shall come praise, and on that day from the mouths of babies came solutions:

Fund transportation infrastructure in the very communities you scrutinize for gang violence, help the children get home safely.

Create and support more after school programs and activities.

Provide students with mentors and examples of a life alternative to the poverty and violence that many of us are facing.

Support mental health experts and trauma experts of color, who are specifically trained to deal with the unique trauma they face.

I listened to young people share the heart-wrenching truths of encounters with gun violence, the broken juvenile justice system, and improperly trained mental health professionals—if they are afforded the opportunity to be in proximity to these professionals at all.

Suicide prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs of suicide and taking them seriously, and talking openly about suicidal thoughts and feelings can save lives.

Although suicide has long been a serious public health problem, the recent and sudden isolation, unemployment and precipitous change ushered in by COVID-19 threatens to increase the incidence of people for whom suicide seems the only viable solution.

By looking out for one another, matching people with the help they need, and helping those who are hurting feel more connected, people who are contemplating suicide have an opportunity to recover and live lives of meaning and purpose.

For this reason, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in support of H.R. 2862.

HONORING FIREFIGHTER BOB
WEIMER

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Bob Weimer for his 21 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Weimer has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community

and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

IN RECOGNITION OF QURISTIN
WALKER

HON. LAUREN UNDERWOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Quristin Walker for her service in my office in Washington, D.C.

Quristin joined our team as a staff assistant on my very first day in office in January of 2019. She was one of just three original staff members charged with setting up a Congressional office, a task which those who have done know is not for the faint of heart. Quristin played an integral role in setting up systems and ensuring every constituent, whether by walk-in, call, or tour request, was responded to in a timely, courteous manner that was demonstrative of my commitment of service to the people of the 14th Congressional District of Illinois. She went above-and-beyond in her role as intern coordinator, often giving life advice to young people with hearts for service that extended far past the walls of my office. She was a listening ear and source of support through moves, graduations, next career steps, and more, as an accessible mentor to so many who came through our internship program.

Quristin's respect for all who entered or called the office, cheery demeanor, and frequent pick-me-up treats and Beyonce music for the team proved to be invaluable assets that kept our team smiling through all the joys and challenges of our work the past two-and-a-half years. Although Quristin may be leaving our office, our community in northern Illinois and my entire staff will always consider her Team Underwood.

Prior to joining my staff, Quristin earned a Bachelor's degree from Northern Illinois University and she currently is pursuing a Master's degree from American University. She is a proud alumna of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Fellowship Program. Our office will miss her.

Madam Speaker, I would like to formally thank Quristin Walker for her service to my office, to Illinois's 14th Congressional District, and to our country.

STEM OPPORTUNITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 17, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, our economic competitiveness and national prosperity depend in large part on our capacity to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.